

V.—DISEASES OF CHILDREN.

HANDBUCH DER KINDERKRANKHEITEN. Herausgegeben von Dr. C. Gerhardt. Vol. V., part I. Tübingen, 1879. (*Hand-book of Diseases of Children. Vol. V., part I.: Diseases of the Nervous System.*)

According to the original plan of this work, a separate volume has been devoted to diseases of the nervous system in children. The one before us comprises the first part: Functional Nervous Diseases, by O. Soltmann; Malformation of the Spinal Cord, by L. Fflrst; Hyperæmia and Hemorrhage of the Cord, by A. Monti; and Meningitis, Myelitis and Tumors of the Cord, by O. Kohts. On the whole, the work ranks on an equal footing with the general style of encyclopedic works now so fashionable in Germany. Each chapter, entrusted to a well-known authority, is intended for a complete résumé of our knowledge. While the completeness is, on the whole, very satisfactory, we cannot spare this volume the reproach of diffuseness. Condensation would indeed have been a virtue, especially in the article of Soltmann, in which too much space is allowed to unprofitable historical opinions.

The functional nervous diseases are divided, according to the usual style, into motor and sensory disturbances, excess of function (spasms, neuralgias, etc.), and reduced functions (paralyses, etc.), diffuse and localized. While the clearness of style is quite admirable, we find but few points necessitating any critical comment. One of the most instructive chapters is that on Infantile Eclampsia, in which the author lays, it seems to us, too much stress upon the importance of his discovery, the absence of cortical centres and spinal inhibitory apparatus in the new-born infant. The most unsatisfactory part in Soltmann's chapters is the treatment. It is true, the author acquaints the reader with everything of value. He also formulates his advice with good judgment; but he lacks that very preciseness which the practitioner would seek most in a work of this kind. Two other sections of the work, the chapters by Fflrst and by Kohts, are fully up to the standard of the entire work. But we cannot say as much for the chapter, written by Monti, on Hyperæmia and Hemorrhage of the Spinal Cord. The first of these conditions is based upon pathological observations of such doubtful value, and is so variable and uncertain in its symptoms, as to render its existence altogether fanciful; while hemorrhage of the cord is not a trouble of sufficient frequency to justify the space devoted to it.

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production of urinary calculus by trigeminal irritation in infantile dentition. His idea is: that the uric acid being produced abundantly by the digestion of the albuminous food of infancy, the tendency to the formation of calculi is favored by a functional disturbance of the liver, a hepatic paresis, due to reflected dental irritation; that as glycogenesis is produced by irritation of the fourth ventricle, so, he claims, lithogenesis in the nursing infant is morbidly produced by reflected dental irritation of the fifth pair implanted in the same nerve centre. The calculi once started become in turn excitors of reflex irritation, and thus aggravate the condition that produced them, and augment their own growth. This is the substance of his theory, and we leave it to our readers to accept it, or not, as it commends itself to their judgments.

The other papers in the volume are apparently of the usual character and merit. It appears to be a very fair representation of the series.

V. The Transactions of the Medical Society of Virginia, which have already appeared according to the custom of the society in the columns of the *Virginia Medical Monthly*, are here collected in a neatly printed pamphlet of one hundred and fifty-two pages. The addresses and reports are fully equal to the average in merit and evince a progressive spirit. The paper of neurological interest in the volume is that by Dr. J. Marion Sims on abscess of the liver, in which he details briefly two cases that have come under his observation, both of them in the practice of Dr. W. A. Hammond. The first was that of a gentleman who came to him in Paris for a renewal of the symptoms after having had his liver aspirated in New York. It was the opinion of Dr. Brown-Sequard, to whom the case was turned over by Dr. Sims, that the liver was not involved, but the patient had afterwards a large quantity of pus aspirated, to his great relief, by a physician in the south of France. The other case was that of a well-known medical journalist, in whom Dr. Hammond diagnosed hepatic abscess from the cerebral symptoms alone, and gave relief by the operation. Dr. Sims gives some interesting particulars of Dr. Hammond's experience in this line, that have not, so far as we know, been published elsewhere. He has operated thus far twenty-six times, in fifteen with success. In eleven no abscess was found, but the operation did no harm. In the introduction of this operation for the relief of melancholia, it would seem that Dr. Hammond had done a real service to the world.
